THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) : (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. An assessment of the requirements of foodgrains (rice and wheat) for distribution under the revamped Public Distribution System (PDS) in the identified areas has been made by this Ministry. Actual allocations of foodgrains are, however, made by the Government on a month to month basis taking into account the demand from the States/UTs., availability of stocks in the Central Pool, relative needs of various States/UTs, seasonal factors etc. The internal distribution of foodgrains and other items within the jurisdiction of the State is done by the State Government themselves, who decide the inter-district, intra-regional including urban and rural areas allocations. Allocations of PDS items are supplemental in nature and are not intended to meet the entire demand of the States/UTs.

Sluggish rainfall projected by Meterological Office

1165. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that if weather-cycle of the past is any guide, rainfall this year may be "Sluggish" as projected by the meteorological office; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA) : (a) and (b) The India Meteorological Department issued an early tentative appreciation of 1992 monsoon, on 8th April, 1992, in which it was stated that India would probably head towards a normal monsoon, but on the lower side of normal with the possibillty of the coming monsoon being somewhat sluggish to begin with. This tentative inference was drawn on the basis of information available on some of the 16 parameters being used in newly developed Monsoon Forecast Model. The firm quantitative forecast for monsoon rains will be available towards the end of May. Scientific study shows that the Indian monsoon rainfall does not show any discernible annual cyclicity.

Gap between demand and supply of edible oils

1166. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a big gap between the demand and supply of edible oils in the country and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether it is also a fact that there is a great scope for exploitation of minor oil obtained from rice-bran, cotton seed, cakes, sunflower etc. to meet the shortage; and

(c) if so, steps being taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) : (a) There is a gap between demand and supply of edible oils in the country which is estimated to be around 7 lakh MT.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Some of the steps taken by the Government for increased exploitation of the minor oilseeds are :—

(i) Continuing the excise rebate scheme available for use of the specified oils in the manufacture of vanaspati;

(ii) Continued exemption of vegetable oils from the levy of excise duty altogether.

(iii) Concessional custom duty on import of certain equipments considered necessary for modernisation of processing units.